

TODAY

On Dec. 21, 1988, 270 people were killed when a terrorist bomb exploded aboard a Pam Am Boeing 747 over Lockerbie, Scotland, sending wreckage crashing to the ground.

In 1620, Pilgrims aboard the Mayflower went ashore for the first time at present-day Plymouth, Massachusetts.

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union forces led by Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman concluded their "March to the Sea" as they captured Savannah, Georgia.

In 1891, the first basketball game, devised by James Naismith, is believed to have been played at the International YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts. (The final score of this experimental game: 1-0.)

In 1914, the U.S. government began requiring passport applicants to provide photographs of themselves.

In 1945, U.S. Army Gen. George S. Patton, 60, died in Heidelberg, Germany, 12 days after being seriously injured in a car accident.

In 1968, Apollo 8 was launched on a mission to orbit the moon.

In 1969, Vince Lombardi coached his last football game as his team, the Washington Redskins, lost to the Dallas Cowboys, 20-10.

In 1976, the Liberian-registered tanker Argo Merchant broke apart near Nantucket Island off Massachusetts almost a week after running aground, spilling 7.5 million gallons of oil into the North Atlantic.

In 1991, eleven of the 12 former Soviet republics proclaimed the birth of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the death of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In 1995, the city of Bethlehem passed from Israeli to Palestinian control.

In 2012, the National Rifle Association said guns and police officers were needed in all American schools to stop the next killer "waiting in the wings," taking a no-retreat stance in the face of growing calls for gun control after the Newtown, Connecticut, shootings that claimed the lives of 26 children and school staff.

In 2015, the nation's three-decade-old ban on blood donations from gay and bisexual men was formally lifted, but major restrictions continued to limit who could give blood in the U.S.

Ten years ago: The U.S. Army announced charges against eight soldiers related to the death of a fellow GI, Pvt. Daniel Chen, who apparently shot himself in Afghanistan after being hazed. (Of the eight, five received prison sentences and two received demotions; four of the eight faced dismissal from the service.) Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers was selected the 2011 AP Male Athlete of the Year. Baylor's Robert Griffin III was selected The Associated Press college football player of the year.

Five years ago: President-elect Donald Trump declared that the deadly truck attack on a Christmas market in Germany that killed 12 people two days earlier was "an attack on humanity and it's got to be stopped"; he also suggested he might go forward with his campaign pledge to temporarily ban Muslim immigrants from coming to the United States.

LOTTERY

Friday, Dec. 17, 2021

Megamillions

21-32-38-48-62

Megaball: 10

Megaplier: 3

Jackpot: \$171 million

Lucky Lines

3-8-9-15-17-22-27-32

Jackpot: \$49,000

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 5-3-1-0

4 p.m.: 3-1-3-6

7 p.m.: 6-7-5-3

10 p.m.: 5-0-7-5

Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021

Powerball

2-6-24-51-61

Powerball: 1

Power Play: 2

Jackpot: \$363 million

Megabucks

8-12-17-20-22-30

Jackpot: \$7.2 million

Lucky Lines

1-5-10-14-19-23-27-29

Jackpot: \$50,000

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 2-5-9-5

4 p.m.: 5-0-0-7

7 p.m.: 4-5-2-6

10 p.m.: 9-9-9-7

Win for Life

1-12-56-71

Sunday, Dec. 19, 2021

Lucky Lines

2-6-9-16-18-21-27-31

Estimated jackpot: \$51,000

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 4-8-9-6

4 p.m.: 7-8-0-6

7 p.m.: 1-0-6-4

10 p.m.: 0-6-5-2

Memorial installed in Elgin

Granite bench honors nearly 75 people in the Elgin area who have died the past two years

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

ELGIN — The downtown decor of Elgin has a new addition, one which may prove to be as timeless as the memories of those it honors.

A memorial granite bench has been installed on Main Street between the Elgin Opera House and the Elgin Museum. The memorial is in memory of those who died in the Elgin area in 2020 and 2021. The granite bench is a complement to a service that took place in August honoring the approximately 75 people in the Elgin area who have died the past two years.

The service was conducted to give people a chance to honor family and friends in the Elgin area for whom services were not conducted because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has prevented many large gatherings, according to Lauri Ferring, pastor of the Elgin Harvesters Nazarene Church, who helped lead the project.

"They were not allowed the service their family and friends clearly needed. We wanted everyone to have a chance to say goodbye," she said.

The new granite bench cost more than \$2,500 and was purchased with donated funds, many of which were contributed by local businesses and the families of loved ones the August service was for.

"It was amazing how people stepped forward to assist," Ferring said.

The granite bench, which features polished engraved lettering, was purchased from La Grande's Memorial Monuments. Kevin Loveland, the owner of Loveland Funeral Chapel, said granite



Dick Mason/The Observer

The Elgin memorial bench, installed in December 2021, sits between the Elgin Museum and the Elgin Opera House and honors those who died over the past two years.

memorials are known for holding up well.

"When they are polished they will last for hundreds of years," said Loveland, who officiated as a volunteer at the August service.

The polishing of a granite stone's engraving is done after the cutting of the granite. This process, which includes sanding, preserves the stone by keeping out water that would otherwise settle into the pores of the stone.

Ferring said the memorial is at an ideal location in Elgin because the opera house and museum are popular places for people to visit. She anticipates that many people going to the venues will see and use the bench.

Ferring said volunteers hope to later make additions to the memorial bench site, such as a display with the names of those who it honors. Options being considered include installing bricks in the ground around it bearing the names of the deceased.

The August memorial service was originally scheduled to be held at the Elgin Stampede Grounds. However, the service had to be moved to Elgin High School when wildfire crews combating the Elbow Creek Fire in Wallowa County had to set up camp there. The service at EHS was attended by about 100 people.

"It was truly amazing. People were in tears and giving each other hugs," Loveland said.

The program at the service listed the names of 31 people whose families and friends requested be honored at the memorial event. Others in the Elgin area or with roots in the community, who had died in 2020 and in the first eight months of 2021, were also honored.

Ferring said the service was possible in part because of the help received from four funeral homes in Union, Umatilla and Baker counties. The funeral homes sent letters to families of those in the Elgin area who died in 2020 and 2021 asking them if they would like their loved ones to be recognized at the service.

The funeral homes were Loveland Funeral Chapel and Crematory, of La Grande; Daniels Knopp Funeral Cremation and Life Celebration Center, of La Grande; Munselle-Rhodes Funeral Home, of Milton-Freewater; and Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home and Cremation Services.

Ferring hopes that other towns will do something similar in the future because she believes it will bring people closer together. "This is a healthy thing for communities to do," she said.

Woodlot warms homes and hearts

Neighbors Together gives away 30-50 cords each year

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — A 1-acre lot in northwest La Grande has no holiday decorations or lights, but the Christmas spirit was present on Saturday, Dec. 18.

The site was Neighbors Together's emergency woodlot, where a monthly giveaway of firewood was in full swing. Anyone who drove to the woodlot could collect a load of free firewood with the help of Nod Palmer, co-director of the woodlot.

Those who came included Lonnie Dayley, of La Grande, who loaded a pickup with wood. He later brought it to the home of a Union County senior who lives alone and is dependent on firewood to keep his home warm each winter. Dayley delivers several loads of wood to his friend each winter.

"I'm so lucky to be able to come here and pick up wood for him," he said.

The firewood giveaway, conducted by Neighbors Together at 3309 N. Umatilla St., is held the third Saturday of each month from October through March. The program, which is a continuation of one conducted by the former Neighbor to Neighbor organization, has been operating about 15 years.



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Lonnie Dayley loads up a cord of wood for a friend at Neighbors Together's emergency wood lot in La Grande on Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021.

The wood is available to everyone regardless of income level. However, the limit for each October to March period is one cord of wood.

Palmer said as many as 40 different people come each fall and winter season to pick up firewood. Many come multiple times a season. Altogether, the woodlot gives away 30-50 cords of wood.

The Neighbors Together lot has enough wood to easily make it through March 2022, Palmer said. He noted, though, that there have been years in which he was worried about running out.

Palmer and fellow co-director Jack St. Clair work throughout the year collecting wood from sites, including those where trees have been trimmed, down during tree thinning operations. Wood provided at the lot includes tamarack,

popular, red fir and maple. Palmer said maple is one of the best woods for fires because it burns so slowly.

"A maple log will last a whole evening," he said.

Palmer doubts that any of the wood picked up during giveaway days is ever wasted.

"The majority of the people who come depend on wood for all of their heat," he said.

Palmer said that some people are so desperate for it that they will pack it into the trunks of their cars.

Everyone who comes to get the wood is gracious.

"It is very heartwarming. They are very thankful," Palmer said. "Some people have hugged me."

He said anyone who would like to assist as a volunteer at the woodlot should contact Neighbors Together at 541-963-9126.

"We can never have too many volunteers," Palmer said.

NEWS BRIEFS

Wallowa County to raise fees \$10 at landfill

ENTERPRISE — Tipping fees at Wallowa County's Ant Flat Landfill will increase by \$10 a ton beginning July 1, 2022, according to a decision by the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners at its meeting Wednesday, Dec. 15.

"We've been thinking about this for a while and we had some different thoughts at the last meeting," Commissioner Todd Nash said. "I still think we should probably be looking at increasing that to \$60 and putting it out there to the first of July, having six months to mes-

sage that and everybody being able to adjust. That puts us still at the lower end of the spectrum of a tipping fee for our adjoining counties. It's appropriate that we monitor it going forward where we need to adjust. That's my recommendation, but the discussion's open."

He said at the board's Dec. 1 meeting that Solid Waste Manager Ed Gomes offered comparisons with other landfills in Northeastern Oregon. Gomes said Baker County charges \$57 a ton, Union County charges \$64.40 a ton and Pendleton charges \$66.30.

The fee increase is for large disposals and won't directly affect the

\$10-per-barrel fee many individuals pay, Nash said.

The other commissioners considered incremental increases until reaching the \$60 level, but they ended up agreeing with Nash.

"I think, and this is my own opinion, to just rip the Band-aid off and get it up there to where it needs to be," Nash said. "Rather than muddy the waters with incremental increases, I think it's more responsible for us to just raise it to \$60. We're still at the lower end of the spectrum of our adjoining counties of Baker, Union and Umatilla counties."

— EO Media Group

Glass art given to county employees

By **BILL BRADSHAW**

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — About 130 people gathered Thursday, Dec. 16, at Cloverleaf Hall, Enterprise, for a Christmas party thrown by the Wallowa County commissioners.

Of that number, 93 employees received hand-blown pint glasses produced by Stirling Webb of Moonshine Glass Art, Enterprise.

"It was a special moment for me to see people with the glasses in their hands and who got what glasses," Webb said Friday. "It was a huge honor for me to be a part of the county's Christmas celebration. This place is really special to me (and) I got to make about 100 individual glasses for the employees who take care of this place that I love so much. I'd just like to say thank you Wallowa County for letting me make their Christmas gifts."

He also had a few other people he wanted to thank.

"I'd like to add a special thank you to Russell Ford, who started Moonshine Glass 30-plus years ago, and Jake Kurtz, a friend who introduced me to Russell's shop."

Five years an artist

Webb worked with Ford for two years in his shop in Wallowa. When Ford retired, Webb purchased his equipment and opened up shop in Enterprise.

"The first time I turned on my open sign was Jan. 1 three years ago," he said.

He's grateful to for the support of his wife, Emily Bright, who with her mother, Brenda Bright, operates B. Bright Vintage in Joseph.

"She helped me take care of my mother while I started blowing glass and helped me chase my dream," Webb said.

He move to the county 12 years ago to take care of his now-deceased mother, Mary Plumlee.

"It ended up being a 10-year caregiving job," he said, "and Emily helped me raise my daughter."

Webb has been a glass artist for five years. He was introduced to the craft while working at Terminal Gravity Brewery and Pub in Enterprise and saw a pint glass produced by Ford's shop.

"That changed my life," he said. "It's functional art and I like that it gets used."

Each is a 'one-off'

But the craft is not easy and Webb attempts to make each work unique, calling each a "one-off."

"There's a high failure rate. I don't do things twice," he said. "When you're experimenting, they're not all home runs. Sometimes they break. But it keeps me feeling intrigued."

County Commissioner Susan Roberts said Thursday that Webb had expressed his appreciation for getting to make the Christmas presents the county gave its employees.

"He said it was wonderful that he was able to use every technique he's learned in the past five years," Roberts said.

She said the previous day that she was glad the county was able to have the annual affair this year. Last year's Christmas party was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's just really nice that we're able to get together again," she said.

Webb estimated the pint glasses are valued at an average of \$45. He said that on the average, they take about 30 minutes from start to finish.

"If I'm working by myself, 10 cups a day is a good day," he said.

People can watch

Webb welcomes people to attend classes he teaches and to just stop in and watch.

"That's what I do," he said. "I share that art with people and I try to share it as best as I can. I give a play-by-play explanation (and) people seem to like that."

Welcoming people in helps build his customer base and helps them understand the value of his work.

"Anybody, if I'm here, is welcome to come watch," Webb said. "I'll tell them to come on back and I'll explain the whole process. When people see that, they understand the value and the creativity and the skills."

Webb said he was told numerous times during Thursday's party by recipients of his work how much they liked them.

"People were really excited to pick out their glasses," he said. "I had several people tell me how much they appreciated them."